

## THE MARION CHURCH.

In response to a general invitation to Brethren ministers to call and preach for them, by sister Mary Rader of Marion, Ind, I announced that I would preach in the Marion church, Saturday and Sunday, January 11 and 12.

Upon my arrival there I found the Brethren had been without preaching for a long time, and left without any one to look after their spiritual welfare. This being a new organization, only about a year old, commenced by the Mission Board through J. M. Rittgers, and were less than 40 in number, having never been properly instructed in the faith and doctrine of the Brethren church, they did not know how to proceed in carrying on the work of the congregation in the absence of a pastor.

After Rittgers had mislead them to build an expensive brick meeting house, without first counting the cost or considering where the money was to come from, he forsook them and united with the New-light church.

They procured the money to erect the building from "The Indiana Mutual Building and Loan Association," at Indianapolis, Ind. They gave a mortgage on the property, and are to pay \$20.54 monthly, until the debt is paid. One payment was made last August, and nothing paid since. Under these and other aggravating circumstances, not necessary to be named here, with no one at the helm to guide them, they had become discouraged and confused, the Sabbath school had disbanded, and only three or four of the class would meet in their weekly prayer meetings.

Another denomination who were anxious that our people should go under, so that they might step in and take possession, had already been there and viewed the premises and even asked our trustees to abandon the wreck and hand over the keys to them.

A more disheartened band of believers I had never visited. And though during the past year I have repeatedly refused to accept pastoral work, where I had been offered a fair compensation for my services, I so sympathized with this discouraged little band of babes in Christ, needing the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby, that I offered my services as their pastor FREE OF CHARGE to them, and without the assurance of receiving any compensation from any other source. My offer was gladly accepted.

I at once wrote the Association at Indianapolis, to see what could be done in reference to the delinquent payments on the Church debt; an immediate reply

said, that the papers were already made out, and had it not been for my timely letter, they would have been given to an attorney for foreclosure that day. This would have made \$150 extra cost, had we undertaken to redeem the property. The Association promised to give us a few days time to see what we could do towards paying off the delinquency. I also prevailed with them to drop the fines, \$14.00 if we paid up promptly.

I went down into my pocket, and so did the rest of our poor brethren at Marion, even to the last penny we could command. Then we started out two or three of our sisters to canvass and beg money; and in just one month we have raised and paid off \$126 leaving yet about \$60 of the delinquency to be provided for, including a side-walk and street delinquent tax claim. We don't know yet how that will be provided for.

During this month I also held for them a two weeks' meeting, resulting in a general rally of our forces at Marion, and increasing our congregations from half a dozen to a full house, so that we had to provide a number of extra seats. Excellent order and good attention was given throughout the meetings. One lady was baptized, two young men who had gone astray, came back and renewed their vows to serve the Lord, and six applicants await baptism at a future meeting.

General confidence is being restored, and many more say that as soon as they see that our cause at Marion is permanent, they will join in with us and they are of the better classes. Indeed I know of no place in our state, where a strong hold for our people can be built up so easily as in the enterprising city of Marion, if we had the proper encouragement.

Marion is the county seat of Grant Co., a thriving city of 20,000 population, and rapidly growing. We have a good brick meeting house, attractive and neat, 36 by 50 feet in size. It is well located in the south part of the city, and the town is improving and building up all around it. A street car line running to Indianapolis, will pass along the street on which the church stands; this will enhance its value and be a great convenience. Persons along this electric line, miles away, can attend the church as well as if they lived in an adjoining block.

But as much as we desire the success of the Marion church, we CAN NOT succeed without help financially. We are making every effort and sacrifice possible, but will at last fail unless the brotherhood will come to our relief. THINK of it ministering brethren, you who have homes of your own, and are getting from five to seven hundred dollars a year for your ser-

vices in well to do churches, with which to support your families. THINK of what we are doing to save our sinking cause at Marion.

I have no home, and no money to support myself and family, except what I earn by hard and honest toil, during the time I can spare from my pastoral labors; yet I travel 90 miles and back, each month, preach three sermons each time, hold their revival meetings during the year, look after all the interests of this church, both spiritual and financial all without one cent of compensation.

I do this solely out of my deep interest for the success of our cause in this city. Will you remember us in your prayers? And what is still better, will you remember us to your congregations and help us financially? WILL YOU please, for Christ's sake help us to "hold the Fort at Marion?" If the cause is lost here now, the people will lose so much confidence in us that it will be useless to try it again here.

## A PROPOSITION.

I offer the following proposition to our brotherhood. In addition to the sacrifice I have already made, and what I will have to make during the year, I will be one of one thousand brethren to give \$1 during the next four weeks to pay off the church debt at Marion. THIS, with the liberal offer of a friend Quaker in the city of Marion, will cancel the debt. He proposes to donate us \$100 for every \$200 we raise outside of Marion to pay off the debt. This can easily be done within the next four weeks and no one will feel any poorer for it. Will we do this?

Pastors go to work at once, and send in the money to brother H. S. Sprinkle, Huntington, Ind. He says we can put him down \$10; one for him and nine for the poor that have no dollar to give. No doubt but other good liberal souls will follow Brother Sprinkle's example, and on the principle that many hands make light work, it can be easily done. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

J. A. RIDENOUR.

Elkhart, Ind.

## FROM MARION, IND.

As it has been some time since we have sent in a report from our church, I will say that we are still alive to the cause and feel very much encouraged since brother J. A. Ridenour was here and held a two weeks' revival meeting for us. We feel confident he will make us a good pastor. May the spirit of God lead and guide him in every effort he makes to build up the cause here. Brethren and sisters pray for us.

MARY RADER.